

THE FRENCH ADMINISTRATION OF INDO-CHINA

cessions in return for a separate agreement. The ensuing Franco-Siamese treaty of 1925 was negotiated with the full knowledge of England. It marked the end of France's judicial rights in Siam, and it made the Mekong Commission a permanent institution, with a demilitarization of that river's banks. The juridical regime of the Mekong has proved to be a thorny problem, but the evident goodwill of both sides is the best guarantee for a satisfactory settlement. This treaty was also a triumph for the policy of direct negotiations between Indo-China and her neighbours. Relations between the two countries have steadily improved since 1907, despite the activity of Annamite nationalists there. Since the depression some Siamese students have found a European education prohibitively expensive, and have come instead to Hanoi University. A series of exchange visits culminated in the recent journey of the King of Siam to his erstwhile vassal and enemy, the King of Cambodia. Greater goodwill could not be shown by any nation.

France's Role in the Pacific

At the turn of the century, all but a few of the most ardent imperialists in France had renounced territorial expansion in the Far East, notably in Yunnan, and had turned towards a consolidation of what was already acquired. Indo-China was, by her admirable location, well suited to radiate French culture and commerce to the neighbouring countries. In such a role France never thought of her colony as a separate entity, but rather as an integral part of herself.

Up to 1922 Indo-China could not communicate with the outside world except through the English cable at Cap Saint

Jacques. The post-War establishment of a French Hne had an obvious military and diplomatic significance. It was supplemented in 1930 by the installation of a telephone service to France, Aeroplanes, plying between France and Saigon, are still another more recent link in bringing Indo-China closer to Europe, and at the same time in developing her individuality* In 1936 a radio-telephone service was established from Saigon with Tokio and Bangkok.

A series of post-War visits to neighbouring countries, as well as a mutual fear of Comiminist agitation, has confirmed this development.

Varenae, like Merlin, visited Java, He created a consulate there and a direct maritime service between Saigon and Batavia (1928). Indo-Cfaina

participated in tfa6 Batavian Exposition, and Java reciprocated at the Pokes de Saigon, In 1935, an advantageous commercial treaty Sealed